

for the Army after September the 11th, 2001. He told his dad that people had an obligation to serve a cause higher than themselves. In Iraq, Lieutenant Harris was an officer known for his toughness and his skill in battle and for the Beanie Babies that he carried with him to hand out to the Iraqi children. He was also known for the photo of his parents' home in Ellijay that he used as a screensaver on his computer. When his troops asked why he chose that picture, he explained, "That is why I'm here."

Lieutenant Harris understood the stakes in Iraq. He knew that to protect his loved ones at home, America must defeat our enemies overseas. If America pulls out of Iraq before the Iraqis can defend themselves, the terrorists will follow us here, home. The best way to honor the memory of brave Americans like Lieutenant Harris is to complete the mission they began—so we will stay; we will fight; and we will win in Iraq.

The war on terror is more than a military conflict; it is the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century. And we're only in its opening stages. To win this struggle, we have to defeat the ideology of the terrorists with a more hopeful vision. So a central element in our strategy is the freedom agenda. We know from history that free nations are peaceful nations. We know that democracies do not attack each other and that young people growing up in a free and hopeful society are less likely to fall under the sway of radicalism. And so we're taking the side of democratic leaders and reformers across the Middle East. We're supporting the voices of tolerance and moderation in the Muslim world. We're standing with mothers and fathers in every culture who want to see their children grow up in a caring and peaceful world. And by leading the cause of freedom in the vital region, we will change the conditions that give rise to radicalism and hatred and terror. We will replace violent dictatorships with peaceful democracies. We'll make America, the Middle East, and the world more secure.

In the early days after 9/11, I told the American people that this would be a long war, a war that would look different from others we have fought, with difficulties and setbacks along the way. The past 5 years have proven that to be true. The past 5 years have

also shown what we can achieve when our Nation acts with confidence and resolve and clear purpose. We've learned the lessons of 9/11, and we have addressed the gaps in our defenses exposed by that attack. We've gone on the offense against our enemies and transformed former adversaries into allies. We have put in place the institutions needed to win this war. Five years after September the 11th, 2001, America is safer, and America is winning the war on terror. With vigilance, determination, courage, we will defeat the enemies of freedom, and we will leave behind a more peaceful world for our children and our grandchildren.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:24 a.m. at the Cobb Galleria Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Brenda Fitzgerald, chairman, board of governors, Georgia Public Policy Foundation; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003; U.S. District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan Anna Diggs Taylor; Zacarias Moussaoui, an Al Qaida operative who was sentenced on May 4 for helping to plan the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; and Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate. He also referred to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission).

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Max Burns in Pooler, Georgia

September 7, 2006

Thanks for coming. I want to thank you all for coming and joining me in supporting my friend Max Burns to be the next Congressman from this district.

Max, this is a good sign that so many people would show up. [*Laughter*] And I thank you for supporting him. I know him quite well. See, as he mentioned, we have worked

together before. He's not an unknown quantity. You don't have to guess about his political philosophy. You don't have to worry about whether he will do the right thing. Max Burns is a man who is the right man to represent the 12th Congressional District for the State of Georgia. And I want to thank you for giving him this strong support.

Max not—I not only think Max is the right guy, but so does Laura. [*Laughter*] She sends her love to the Burns family, to Lora and Max. She sends her thanks to all of you. And she reminded me to remind—to thank you for the fantastic experience we had down here in 2004. If you ever want to host an international conference, I strongly suggest this part of the country. The G-8 was a great success, primarily because of the beauty of the coastline and, more importantly, the warmth of the people here on the coastline. And so we're proud to be back in Savannah. This is good country with good people. And I'm proud to be back, and I'm real proud to be supporting Max.

Today I'm traveling from Atlanta, where I gave a speech, the third of three speeches on what we're doing to secure this country, and I traveled over on Air Force One with a man who is doing a fabulous job as the Governor of an important State, and that's Governor Sonny Perdue. Sonny, thanks for coming. He's a straightforward fellow. He's the kind of guy, frankly, that the Texas voters would be comfortable with. [*Laughter*] He's no-nonsense. He's down-to-earth. What you see is what you get. And even though he didn't ask, I do want to remind you to support him for his reelection. He deserves it.

Max is going to be working with a really important and a very fine senatorial group of folks from Georgia. I know firsthand because I work with them all the time. This State has done a very smart thing in sending Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson to the United States Senate. I'm proud they're here, and I thank them for coming.

I'm looking forward to getting my instructions on Air Force One flying back to Washington. [*Laughter*] They're not shy about telling me what's on their mind, and it usually starts with, "Here's what's best for Georgia."

I'm proud to be here with Eric Johnson, president pro tem of the Georgia State Sen-

ate. Thanks for coming, senator. Tommie Williams, who is the majority leader of the Georgia State Senate, is with us. Senator, thank you for coming as well.

I know Max appreciates the statehouse people supporting him. I know he is proud to have the support of those who run for office themselves. It's a good sign. When people have been out there knocking on doors saying, "I'm for this man for Congress," they know what the grassroots are thinking; they know what the people want. The people want Max Burns to return to the United States Congress, and so do I.

Swainsboro mayor, Mayor Charles Schwabe is with us today. Mayor, thank you for coming. I appreciate Karen Handel, who's the candidate for secretary of state, joining us today. Perry McGuire, the candidate for the attorney general for the State of Georgia, is with us as well. Brent Brown and Gary Black—they're colorful characters—[*laughter*—running for the labor commissioner and agriculture commissioner.

I appreciate—let me just say this—I appreciate all of you running statewide. It's hard work. I know you want me to say this—these folks need your help too. It's not easy to be a candidate; it just isn't. And when you find somebody as honest as Max, who's willing to step up there and run, I believe you owe him more than just writing a check; I believe you owe him putting up those signs. That's what I believe. I believe you owe him time, if you don't mind me saying so. He's counting on it, and so am I. It's important to have good, strong, decent, honorable people like Max Burns representing you in the United States Congress.

I want to thank Mike Wiggins, the candidate for the Georgia Supreme Court. I appreciate you being here, Mike.

And finally, I can't—I want to thank the original members of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. I want to thank the museum director. This is a spectacular facility, and we're grateful that we could use it.

These are historic times in which we live. These are—and that's why it's important to have people in the Congress who clearly see the challenges this Nation faces. We are a nation at war. I can't tell you how much I wish I could come to Savannah, Georgia, and

say we weren't at war. I wish I could report that to you, but I can't.

It should have been clear to the American people that we're still under threat when a couple of weeks ago, working with Great Britain, we uncovered yet another plot. People were going to get on airplanes bound for the United States and destroy them because they can't stand what we believe. We're facing ideologues.

In other words, these are people that have a belief system. The best way to understand the belief system they have is to think opposite of what we believe. We believe in the freedom of people to worship. See, you're equally American if you're Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, agnostic, whatever. You're equally American. You have the right to choose. The people that face us, the radicals and extremists who attack us, believe you ought to worship one way, the way they believe, or else you're condemned. We believe in people being able to express themselves in the public square. We believe in dissent. We believe in the freedom of the press. We believe in freedom, and they don't.

I will be in New York City and in Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon next Monday with Laura. It is a day for us to remember the sorrow and the horror of that day. It's a day for us to remember the incredible bravery of first-responders who were willing to rush into danger to save life. It's a day to remember those on the airplane that drove that airplane into the ground, which was the first victory in the war on terror.

And it's also a day to remember the lessons learned. And the first lesson learned from that day is that the most important duty that those of us in the executive branch and the legislative branch have is to protect the American people from harm. And the best way to do so is to stay on the offense, is to defeat the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

So I need Members of Congress who understand that we must give our troops and intelligence and those responsible for protecting America all the support they need. See, in order to stay on the offense, we have got to support those on the frontline of protecting the American people. We will use all assets to defend this Nation.

I learned another lesson, and that is, in order to protect the country, we must deny the enemy safe haven. See, the people were plotting and planning to attack us from Afghanistan, and so I laid out a doctrine that said, if you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist. You'll be an enemy of the United States, and we will hold you to account.

The Taliban found out what I meant, and so over the last 5 years, we liberated 25 million people in Afghanistan but, equally important, denied the radicals, the extremists, a safe haven from which to plot and plan. I need Members of Congress who understand—Members like Max Burns—that when the President says something, he better mean what he says, in order to make sure the world is a more peaceful place.

A lesson of September the 11th, an important lesson for the President and Members of Congress and people of the United States is that when we see a threat, we must take the threat seriously before they come to the United States and hurt us. I saw a threat in Iraq. I not only saw the threat; nations around the world saw the threat. Republicans and Democrats in the United States Congress saw the same threat. We went to the United Nations and said to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." I believe that when the President and the world speaks, they better mean what they say, in order to keep the peace. I meant what it said. Saddam Hussein didn't. He ignored the demands of the free world. Our coalition removed Saddam Hussein from power, and the world is better off.

And now the question is, will the United States of America keep its word and help this young democracy survive? It's really the challenge. And it's hard work. I fully understand why Americans are troubled by the death and destruction they see on their television screens. I know that. You see, it's easy to understand because I understand the compassion of the United States of America. Isn't it a wonderful country when people suffer when they see a child maimed by an extremist's car bomb. It's the nature of our country. We care deeply. We suffer when one of our youngsters lose their life in combat.

The stakes in Iraq are incredibly high, however. It's really important that we succeed. It's important for a lot of reasons. If we were to leave before the job is done—and the job is this: to help this young democracy govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself; to help this young democracy that has formed because 12 million people went to the polls and said, "We're tired of tyranny; we're tired of subjugation; we want to be free."

That's the challenge. If we leave before the job is done, if we leave before this country's forces are able to defend themselves from the enemies of freedom who want to destroy this young democracy, if we forget the words of Usama bin Laden, who has declared that Iraq is the central part of this war on terror, if we ignore the words of Zawahiri—the number-two man in Al Qaida, who has said that what we're going to do is drive America out of Iraq; we'll be able to use Iraq then as a launching pad to destroy moderate governments in the Middle East; we'll be able to launch attacks against our enemy, America—if we ignore those words, if we ignore the hopes and aspirations of the Iraqi people, we will have failed when history looks back.

We will have created a situation that is more dangerous than today. We will have said to our enemies that we will give you a key victory in the war on terror. We will have said to our friends, "You can't count on us." We will have said to the reformers and moderates in the Middle East who are so desperate to live in a society that is hopeful that "You don't matter." We will say to the troops and their families who have sacrificed, "Your sacrifice wasn't worth it."

Make no mistake about it, if the United States leaves before the mission is complete, the enemy will follow us here to America. The stakes are high. We will help this Government succeed, and we will achieve victory in Iraq.

I have defined the struggle we're in as the ideological struggle of the 21st century. You see, we face the task not only of protecting ourselves in the short run by staying on the offense and improving our intelligence and finding people before they come here; we also have a weapon for the long term. And

that is, in order to win an ideological struggle, you have to be able to have an ideology of hope that defeats an ideology of hate.

And we have such an ideology; we live it. It's an ideology based upon liberty. It's this notion that we strongly believe here in America that democracies don't war, that a free society is the best way to prevent radicalism and extremism from convincing people to become suiciders. Free societies equal hopeful societies.

You know, one of the challenges I face as your President is to make it absolutely clear—the stakes in this war on terror. And what I'm saying is, the stakes are more than just protecting you from attack. The stakes really are protecting future generations from attack. If we were to leave early and concede the Middle East to the enemies of freedom, imagine a world in which moderate governments get toppled. Imagine a world in which extremists and radicals have control of oil that they'll be able to use to inflict incredible economic damage on those of us who love liberty. Imagine a world in which state sponsors of terror have a nuclear weapon to be able to blackmail the world. Imagine such a world. I can see it coming if America does not do our duty and support moderation over extremism.

The other day in a speech, I said, "Fifty years from now, if the United States does not rise to the challenge, a generation of our citizens will look back and say, 'What happened? What happened to America?' " No President is going to allow this to happen, and I'm not going to allow this to happen. We will—[*applause*].

And I got great confidence in the outcome. You know, I guess the best way for me to describe why I'm confident is to tell you about my experience with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. You might remember, recently I had the pleasurable experience of going to Elvis's place—[*laughter*]—Graceland, right there in Memphis, Tennessee. Isn't that interesting? I thought it was. [*Laughter*] I invited him to go down to Graceland, and I'd never been to Graceland. I thought it would be kind of fun to go down there, and Laura wanted to go. [*Laughter*] More importantly, he wanted to go. See, he's an Elvis fan. [*Laughter*] I also wanted to send

a message to our fellow citizens that is relevant today, and here it is. One way to put it is—and can you imagine somebody in 1948, after World War II, after the bloody battles and fighting the Japanese—the sworn enemy of the United States—saying, “You know, I’ll make a prediction for you; someday, an American President is going to be taking a Japanese Prime Minister to the home of a famous American singer.” [Laughter] I don’t think that person would have had much credibility. [Laughter]

Something happened between when my dad and many of your relatives fought the Japanese in a bloody war, and the 43d President is on Air Force One flying down to see Elvis Presley. Something happened—Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Liberty has got the capacity to convert enemies into allies. That’s what history tells us. You know, when the Prime Minister and I flew down on Air Force One to Elvis’s place, we didn’t talk about Elvis. We talked about keeping the peace. We talked about North Korea. We talked about the fact that he had 1,000 troops helping this young democracy in Iraq, because he understands what I know—liberty can transform areas of hate into areas of hope. Someday, an American President is going to be sitting down with duly elected leaders in the Middle East talking about keeping the peace, and a generation of Americans will be better off.

Max Burns understands the stakes. He’s going to be the right guy to represent you in Washington. He also understands this: He, like me, understands that if you’re worried about whether your economy is going to grow, that the best way to encourage growth is to just let you keep more of your own money. See, we have a theory that says, if you have more money in your pocket to save, invest, or spend, the economy will grow.

And you know what? We tested our theory in the face of recession, corporate scandal, war, Katrina, high energy prices, and it works. Today, the national unemployment rate is 4.7 percent. We’ve added over 5½ million jobs since August of 2003. Our economy is the strongest of any major industrialized nation in the world. Lowering your taxes has worked.

I want to work with Max to make sure the tax cuts we passed are permanent. You know, it’s interesting in Washington; you’ll hear people say, “Well, we just need to raise your taxes to balance the budget.” That’s the language of a lot of folks up there. That’s not the way Washington works. Max understands this, as do I. Here’s the way it works: They’ll say, “Okay, we’ll raise your taxes, but we will figure out new ways to spend your money.” [Laughter] The best way to balance this budget—and we’re on the way to doing so. I said we’ll cut the deficit in half by 2009; we’re cutting it in half by 2008. The best way to balance the budget is to keep progrowth economic policies in place—that means low taxes and be wise about how we spend your money—is to set priorities about how we spend your money.

And here are my priorities. Here are my priorities. The first priority is to spend enough money to make sure we can protect the homeland. The Port of Savannah, I understand, is an important part of securing the homeland. You need a Congressman who can pick up the phone and say, “Mr. President, you came and talked about the Port of Savannah when you campaigned for me.” That Congressman is going to be Max Burns.

And the other priority is to make sure our troops, our brave men and women who wear the uniform of the United States of America, have all it takes to defend the United States of America. Max understands that. He understands when you put a kid in harm’s way, they deserve the full support of the United States Government.

A couple other things I want to talk about right quick is—you know, the country shouldn’t fear the future. We really shouldn’t. As a matter of fact, we ought to welcome the future and shape the future. And the best way to remain the world’s leading economy, which I strongly think we ought to do, is not only keep taxes low and keep lawsuits reasonable, make sure the entrepreneurial spirit is strong—is to do some things on energy. I am concerned about the fact that we are addicted to foreign oil. I know that might sound odd for somebody from Texas to say, but I am a realistic fellow. See,

I get to see the consequences of needing energy from parts of the world that don't like us. That creates a national security issue.

The world is connected today so that when demand for crude oil goes up in China and India, it affects the price of gasoline in Savannah, Georgia. There are economic consequences, and there are national security consequences for being dependent on foreign sources of oil, and we have started a very strong initiative to diversify away from oil. And I'm going to work with Max to make sure that the ethanol initiative that we promoted—an initiative that says we want Georgia farmers growing energy on behalf of the American people.

Old Max said this—I thought this was an interesting quote—so for all the farmers who might be listening to what your Congressman thinks, he said, “I already know Georgia farmers are the best providers of food and fiber in the world, and if we can grow it, eat it, drink it, and wear it, then certainly we can burn it.” And we need to be selling that which Georgia grows.

Now, I know the trade is important for the Port of Savannah. I just want to tell you my view on trade. I believe it's in the interest of Georgia farmers—I know it's in the interest of Savannah, people who depend upon the Port of Savannah—to have more markets for U.S. goods.

We're 5 percent of the people in the world, in the United States. That means 95 percent of the world is potential customers. But trade means this to me—it just says—let me put it to you this way: I want the other people to treat us the way we treat them. That's all I ask. Treat us fairly. America can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level, and that's what we'll be working for in Washington, DC.

In order for America to be a great nation, we got to make sure that we have got an education system that is giving the kids the skills necessary to be able to compete in a global economy. And that starts with the early grades. It means we got to make sure a child can read, write, and add and subtract early, before it's too late.

I'm a strong believer in the No Child Left Behind Act. It believes in local control of schools. It says the Governor sets the policy.

But it also says that, in return for Federal money, you measure, so we can know. There's nothing worse than a system that guesses on whether a child has got the skills necessary to compete. We need to know early. And if we find a child that needs extra help, we'll provide extra help so no child is left behind.

Max is an educator. He knows what he's talking about when it comes to education. And 2007 is going to be an important year when it comes to reauthorizing No Child Left Behind. This district would be wise to send a good man, who knows what he's talking about when it comes to educating children, to Washington, DC.

Laura said, “Don't talk too long when you get up there.” I'm running out of oxygen, and so are you. [*Laughter*]

I do want to share one other thought about our country. I mean there's a lot of issues, and Max will be talking about them. One of the most important initiatives that I have started in Washington is called the Faith-Based and Community-Based Initiative.

The reason it's an important initiative is because it taps into the strength, the true strength of the American people, and that is the hearts of the American people. We are a compassionate neighbor. It's just an amazing country, isn't it, where there are millions of acts of kindness that take place on a daily basis without one government edict. People are listening to a—many times, to a higher calling, a calling much higher than government.

De Tocqueville, a Frenchman, came to America in the 1830s and saw the spirit of America. He saw the fact that America is a unique place because there were voluntary associations where people bound together to help solve community problems.

I strongly believe that many of the most intractable problems in society require something more than government, and therefore, our society must welcome the healers and helpers and people full of love as a part of solving and improving the human condition. And one practical thing—the way to do this is to open up Federal money for competitive grants to houses of worship.

See, I firmly believe that there are some neighborhoods in which the church or the

synagogue or the mosque can be much more effective than the government program. After all, people who go to the houses of worship go because they want to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

Ours is a fantastic country, full of the armies of compassion that feed the hungry and find shelter to the homeless and put their arm around somebody and says, "I love you, brother; what can I do to help?" Government is of law and justice; love comes from a higher calling. And I need Members of the United States Congress who are willing to stand strong to make sure the Faith-Based Initiative in Washington, DC, is strong, active, and alive, so we can help change America one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

And so I've come back to Savannah with a simple message: Please send a good man—a good, smart man—a good, honest, smart man, who loves his family and loves the people of this district, to the United States Congress. And that man is Max Burns.

Thanks for coming. May God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Walter E. Brown, president and chief executive officer, Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Proclamation 8047—Patriot Day, 2006

September 7, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On the fifth anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, we recall the fire and horror at the twin towers of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a Pennsylvania field. America will always remember the thousands of innocent lives taken by the enemies of freedom that morning.

In the face of these unspeakable attacks, we were reminded that the great strength

of America is found in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We witnessed firefighters, police officers, other public safety officials, and ordinary Americans demonstrate extraordinary courage, risking their lives to save innocent victims. We saw our country united in compassion as Americans came together to provide relief and bring hope to others.

Today, America is fighting a war that is testing our Nation's resolve. We are once again answering history's call with confidence, and we know that freedom will prevail. Our brave men and women in uniform have stepped forward to fight our enemies abroad so that we do not have to face them here at home, and we are grateful for the courageous individuals bringing terrorists to justice around the world.

We are also confronting the extremists in the great ideological struggle of the 21st century. September the 11th made clear that, in the long run, the only way to secure our Nation is to advance liberty and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism. By working together with our friends and allies, we are helping spread the blessings of freedom and laying the foundations of peace for generations to come.

The events of September 11, 2001, will always be a defining moment in our history. We hold the victims and their families in our hearts, and we lift them up in our prayers.

By a joint resolution approved December 18, 2001 (Public Law 107-89), the Congress has designated September 11 of each year as "Patriot Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 11, 2006, as Patriot Day. I call upon the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half staff on Patriot Day. I also call upon the people of the United States to observe Patriot Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and remembrance services, to display the flag at half staff from their homes on that day, and to observe a moment of silence beginning at 8:46 a.m. eastern daylight time to honor the innocent Americans and people from around